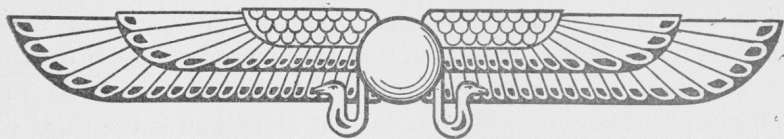


"Point out the 'Way'—However dimly, and lost among the host as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness."



MERCURY.

EDITORIAL + STAFF:

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A Theosophist's Description of Heaven.

MR. C. W. Leadbeater, in a very interesting little book called the *Devachanic Plane* (Theosophical Manual No. 6) relates—in very much the same manner as a traveller in a strange country would talk to us of his travels—what the conditions are which exist upon that plane of consciousness which is more familiar to us under the name of "Heaven." He speaks as one having experience, and not as a mere recorder of others' explorations. There can be no doubt that the writer expects us to regard his description as an actual fact, and not as visionary or imaginative speculation, for he informs us at the beginning of the treatise that "the object of this manual is to present a summary of the facts about Devachan (Heaven) at present known to us," and then proceeds "and, as previously in the case of the Astral Plane, I am requested by our investigators to say that while they deprecate the assumption of anything like authority, they have felt it due to their fellow students to take every precaution in their power to ensure accuracy in their statements. Indeed, I may say that in this case also "no fact, old or new, has been admitted to this treatise unless it has been confirmed by the testimony of at least two independent trained investigators among

ourselves, and has also been passed as correct by older students whose knowledge on these points is necessarily much greater than our own. It is hoped, therefore, that this account, though it cannot be considered as complete, may yet be found reliable as far as it goes." The writer informs us that Devachan is the third of the five great planes with which humanity is at present concerned, having below it the astral and the physical.

Having, in other literature, given us an outline of the process by which man's evolution is accomplished, namely, a constant alternation between such forms of mental and other activity as man manifests in physical life on the one hand, and, on the other, an existence as a mental entity freed from the limitations of our flesh and the passions and emotions which serve to link it to the mind, there is no attempt made in this work to furnish details on that branch of the subject. Knowledge thereof is taken for granted, and we are cursorily informed that it (Devachan) is the lowest plane upon which man, unless at an exceedingly early stage of his progress, spends by far the greater part of his time during the process of evolution; for, except in the case of the entirely undeveloped, the proportion of the physical life to the Devachanic is rarely much greater than one in 20, and in the case of fairly good people it would sometimes fall as low as one in 40.

That there is not to be a full revelation is to be inferred from the following words:

"Unfortunately there are practically many insuperable difficulties in the way of any attempt to put the facts of this third plane of nature into language, and not unnaturally, for we often find words insufficient to express our ideas and feelings even on this lowest plane." The consciousness of that plane is so immensely wider than anything we can imagine down here, and its very conditions so widely different, that when called upon to translate it all into mere ordinary words the explorer feels himself utterly at a loss, and can only trust that the intuition of his readers will supplement the inevitable imperfections of his description. Of this difference in conditions he then proceeds to cite an instance. He says it would seem as though in Devachan space and time were non-existent, for events which here take place in succession and at widely separated places, appear there to be occur-

ring simultaneously and at the same point. Mr. Leadbeater seems to lean to the view that absolute simultaneity does not exist there, but that such an impression arises from a succession so rapid that the infinitesimally minute spaces of time are indistinguishable, a parallel instance of which upon the physical plane is occasioned by the rapid whirling of a torch and the resulting impression of a continuous ring of fire.

We are told that unless a man stand in the position of pupil to a qualified master there is but little likelihood of his being able to pass in full consciousness into that glorious land of bliss, and return to earth with clear remembrance of what he has seen there.

Intensity of bliss is the first great idea which must form a background to all our conceptions of Devachan. It is not only a world in which from its very constitution, evil and sorrow are impossible; it is a world in which every being must, from the very fact of his presence there, be enjoying the highest spiritual bliss of which he is capable—a world whose power of response to his aspirations is limited only by his capacity to aspire; nothing on earth is like it, nothing can image it. If one could suppose the bounding life of childhood carried up into our spiritual experience and then intensified many thousand-fold, perhaps some faint shadow of an idea of it might be suggested; yet even such a simile falls miserably short of that which is beyond all words—the tremendous spiritual vitality of the Devachanic plane.

One way in which this intense vitality manifests itself is the extreme rapidity of vibration of all particles and atoms of Devachanic matter, those vibrations being as much quicker than those of our physical plane as vibrations of light are than those of sound. It is a world in which the omnipresent life which pulsates ceaselessly around and within the consciousness is of a different order altogether, and is as it were raised to an enormously higher power.

The Devachanic sense is described in the following words: "The very sense itself, by which he (the pupil) is enabled to cognize all this, is not the least of the marvels of this celestial world; no longer does he hear and see and feel by separate and limited organs, as he does down here, nor has he even the immensely

extended capacity of sight and hearing which he possessed on the astral plane; instead of these he feels within him a strange new power which is not any of them, and yet includes them all and much more—a power which enables him the moment any person or thing comes before him, not only to see it and feel it and hear it, but to know all about it instantly inside and out—its causes, its effects, and its possibilities, so far, at least, as that plane and all below it are concerned. He finds that for him to think is to realize; there is never any doubt, hesitation or delay, about this direct action of the higher sense. If he thinks of a place he is there; if of a friend, that friend is before him, no longer can misunderstandings arise, no longer can he be deceived or misled by any outward appearances, for every thought and feeling of his friend is an open book before him on that plane.

All knowledge which does not transcend this lofty plane, is to be had for the searching. The past of the world is as open as the present. History, whether ancient or modern, unfolds itself before the eyes at will. The inhabitant can study for himself any incident in which he is interested, with the absolute certainty of seeing the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. If one is able to stand upon the higher levels of this plane the long line of his past lives unrolls itself before him as a scroll. The Karmic causes which have made him what he is, the Karma which still is before him to be worked out, both these can be seen, but the future cannot be seen as clearly as the past.

Intense bliss, indescribable vitality and enormously increased power are the first impressions of the pupil. His new sense reveals him to himself in the midst of what seems to him a whole universe of ever-changing light and color and sound, such as it has never entered into his loftiest dreams to imagine. Verily, it is true that down here "eye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard, neither hath it entered into the mind of man to conceive" the glories of the Devachanic plane. Yet this experience is so utterly unlike anything we know on the physical plane that in trying to put it into words one is troubled by a curious sense of helplessness—of absolute incapacity, not only to do it justice, for of that one resigns all hope at the outset, but even to give any idea at all of it to those who have not themselves seen it. Let a man

imagine himself, with the feelings of intense bliss and enormously increased power already described, floating in a sea of living light, surrounded by every conceivable variety of loveliness in form and color—the whole changing with every wave of thought that he sends out from his mind. Yet a man, if he so wishes, may actually live, in that sea, in a world of his own without possibility of interruption. This marvellous wealth of light and color is simply the glorious color-language of the Devas (gods). By experiment and practice the man acquires the power to hold converse with and learn from the loftier inhabitants of this plane.

Great pulsations of energy and life flow with resistless regularity through all the matter of the plane. And, grander than all these, sweeps one great wave which seems the very heart-beat of the system—a wave which, welling up from unknown centres on far higher planes, pours out its life through all our world, and then draws back in its tremendous tide to That from which it came. In one long undulating curve it comes, and the sound of it is like the murmur of the sea; and yet in it and through it all the while there echoes a mighty ringing chant of triumph—the very music of the spheres. The man who has once heard that glorious song of nature never quite loses it again; even here, on this dreary physical plane of illusion he hears it always as a kind of undertone, keeping ever before his mind the strength and light and splendor of the real life above.

Having proceeded thus far in the description of the surroundings, the author points out that all that has been said may be taken as applying to the lowest subdivision of the Devachanic plane, there being seven subdivisions in all. Of these, four are called rupa planes, or planes of form, while the other and higher three are spoken of as arupa or formless, the reason for this nomenclature being that on the rupa planes every thought takes to itself a certain definite form, while on the arupa, thought expresses itself in an entirely different manner. As there is a physical body appropriate for use upon our physical plane so there is a mental body for use upon the four lower subdivisions of Devachan, and a causal or spiritual body upon the three higher, this causal body being the vehicle of the reincarnating Ego which persists, immortal, during the whole life of a world.

Illusion is still possible on the lower subdivisions, while on the higher, one sees truly and is not self deceived.

An explanation is given of the manner in which thought acts on that plane of existence, and the experiments adopted to discriminate between its workings, but one who desires to go into this matter at all, carefully, must refer to the book itself. There are, however, three great principles suggested as underlying the production of thought forms: That (1) The *quality* of a thought determines its color; (2) The *nature* of a thought determines its form, and (3) The *definiteness* of a thought determines the clearness of its outline.

The writer confesses his inability to describe the real difference between the matter of the various subplanes of Devachan in other than very general terms for, he says, the unfortunate scribe bankrupts himself of adjectives in an unsuccessful attempt to describe the lowest plane, and then has nothing left to say about the others. He asks what, indeed, can be said, except that ever as we ascend, the material becomes finer, the harmonies fuller, the light more living and transparent? There are more overtones in the sound, more delicate intershades in the colors as we rise; more and more new colors appear—hues entirely unknown to the physical sight.

On this plane it is said there exist what is known as the Akâshic records, which form what may be called the memory of nature, the only really reliable history of the world. The student who has succeeded in developing the powers latent within himself so far as to enable him to use the Devachanic sense while still in the physical body, has before him a field of historical research of most entrancing interest. Not only can he review at his leisure all history with which we are acquainted, correcting as he examines it, the many errors and misconceptions which have crept into the accounts handed down to us; he can also range at will over the whole story of the world from its very beginning, watching the slow development of intellect in man, the descent of the Lords of the Flame and the growth of the mighty civilizations which they founded. The student has also before him, as in a museum, all the strange animal and vegetable forms which occupied the stage in days when the world was young; he can follow

all the wonderful geological changes which have taken place, and watch the course of the great cataclysms which have altered the whole face of the earth again and again. Many and varied are the possibilities opened up by access to these Akâshic records; when to this we add the remarkable increase in the opportunities given by its new and wider faculty—the rest and relief from the weary strain of physical life that is brought by the enjoyment of its deep unchanging bliss, and above all the enormously enhanced capability of the developed student for the service of his fellow-men—then we shall begin to have some faint conception of what a pupil gains when he wins the right to enter at will and in perfect consciousness upon his heritage in this bright realm of bliss.

THE INHABITANTS OF THIS PLANE

are divided by the writer into human, non-human and artificial.

The human inhabitants he subdivides into two classes—those who are still attached to the physical body, and those who are not—the living and the dead as they are commonly but most erroneously called, for when we leave this physical earth, we pass into *true* life, not out of it. To call them embodied and disembodied will be the least misleading phrase that can be applied to these classes.

Dealing first with THE EMBODIED. Those human beings, who while still attached to a physical body, are found moving in full consciousness and activity upon this plane are invariably, either Initiates or Adepts, who are said to be, to the vision which has learnt to see them, magnificent objects—splendid globes of light and color, driving away all evil influence wherever they go, and shedding around them a feeling of restfulness and happiness of which even those who do not see them are often conscious. In very rare cases ordinary people during sleep and psychically developed persons in a trance condition penetrate to this plane. Purity of life and purpose would be absolute prerequisite and even then there would be simply a capacity for receiving certain impressions rather than what would be called real consciousness. Then taking up THE DISEMBODIED, it is pointed out to us that we should have very clearly in our minds the broad distinction between the rupa, or form-level, and the arupa or formless level.

In the former, we are told, the man still fully identifies himself with his personality in the life which he has recently quitted; on the latter (the arupa) he is simply the reincarnating Ego, who understands, at least to some extent, the evolution upon which he is engaged, and the work that he still has to do. Every man passes through both these stages between death and birth. As a man's evolution proceeds, he becomes more conscious of this plane, and the period he passes in this world of reality becomes longer. In other words, each man determines both the intensity and the length of his stay in his heaven. Mr. Leadbeater then turns aside to discuss the question of the reality of Devachanic life, and attempts to dispose of the oft-made objection that Theosophical teachings make the life of the ordinary person in Devachan nothing but a dream and an illusion. The conclusion at which he arrives is, that the Devachanic life, instead of being illusory, is in part less illusory and less useless than the physical. He declares that such illusion as there is, inheres in the personality. The more the consciousness is centred in the personality, the greater the illusion; when the personality is, for the time, dissipated, no illusion remains, as in physical life the consciousness is very much confined to the personality, it is in the physical life that we find the most unreality. As the soul rises, in its path of progress, from plane to plane of consciousness, the unreal, the transient and the impermanent melt away beneath the flood of light which flows from the great subjective one reality. Down here the world of which one is sensible is never the *whole* of the outer world, but only so much of it as his senses, his intellect, his education, enable him to take in. His conception of everything around him is a wrong one—empty, imperfect, inaccurate in a dozen ways, for what does he know of the great forces which lie behind everything he sees? What does he know, as a rule, even of the more recondite physical facts which surround him everywhere and always? Here, even more than in Devachan, man lives in a world which is largely of his own creation. He does not realize that, of course, either here or there, but that is only because of his ignorance. As a man becomes more real, his Devachan becomes more real. Not only so, but in Devachan we know our friends more really than we know them down here.

Communication is possible between those who still live on earth and those who have passed into this celestial realm; but the living man, in order to so consciously communicate must have evolved his consciousness to the point of unifying his personal with that of the higher Ego, when he can therefore use the power of the Ego while still in the physical body. Then he can enter at will and in full consciousness into that communication and can speak once more face to face with his friend as in days of yore. Devachan is no illusion but a living reality. The system thus outlined makes every one happy to the fullest extent of his capacity for happiness, and, at the same time, apportions his reward to his deserts.

The writer also discusses the very interesting questions of "The qualities necessary for Devachanic life." "How a man first gains Devachan;" its various subplanes with their gradations of consciousness and bliss, giving many suggestive illustrations of the various characters met there, showing where the man is located according to his dominant characteristic while on earth, whether it was family affection, religious devotion, unselfish pursuit of knowledge, service for service's sake, artistic and literary effort inspired by a desire to elevate and spiritualize the race, or altruistic effort because the tie of brotherhood had been felt.

The non-human inhabitants of Devachan are also described, among which are included those wonderful and excellent beings, called by the Hindus Devas, and elsewhere spoken of as Angels, Sons of God, etc. But those who wish to know more about these subjects should read the book itself.

Mr. Leadbeater, in closing, modestly says, "In glancing over what has been written, the prominent idea is, not unnaturally, a humiliating sense of the utter inadequacy of all the attempts at description—of the hopelessness of any effort to put into human words the ineffable glories of the heaven-world. Still, lamentably imperfect as such an essay as this must be, it is yet better than nothing, and it may serve to put into the mind of the reader some faint conception of what awaits him on the other side of the grave * * * and that ever, as we rise higher in the

scale of nature, our possibilities become greater, our work for others ever grander and more far-reaching, and that infinite wisdom and infinite power mean only infinite capacity for service, because they are directed by infinite love." * F. E. TITUS.

Confirmations of Theosophy by Science.

The value of an enlightened philosophy such as Theosophy supplies is most forcibly shown to us in the remarkable advance of science in the last decade. There is no denying the fact that to this enlightened philosophy science is vastly indebted during the period mentioned. Give science but a clue, a guiding principle, a philosophical hint, and she will soon succeed in producing the *scientific* evidence which the western world is always crying for, to establish upon an inductive basis a philosophical or a *apriori* truth. That this is the case is proved by every scientific generalization which science has yet established, from Newton's law of gravitation to the conservation of energy.

During the last decade the science of physiology, by the discoveries of Col. de Rochas of Paris and Dr. Baraduc of Paris, the science of geology, by Prof. Le Conte's critical periods in the history of the earth, the science of archæology by Dr. Le Plongeon's discoveries in Central America, and the science of physics, through the researches of Röntgen and Crookes, have been particularly corroborative of the truths of Theosophy enunciated first in the *Secret Doctrine*.

The latest corroboration of Theosophy, which I will now endeavor to state briefly, is as remarkable as any of its predecessors. It has come from the department of astronomical physics, through the researches of the Astronomer Percival Lowell, and relates to the axial rotation period of the Planet Venus. The results of these remarkable discoveries are given in detail in *Popular Astronomy* for December and January last. Percival Lowell has discovered what Schiaparelli had suspected for some time, that the rotation periods of Mercury and Venus upon their axes are

* The writer desires to call to the attention of the reader the fact that although he has used quotation marks sparingly, he is indebted to Mr. Leadbeater for the phraseology of of nearly the whole of the article.

identical with the periods of their revolution round the sun. The period of Venus's revolution round the sun is 224.7 days, that of Mercury 87.9 days. The *Secret Doctrine* states, in a letter from one of the Masters, page 188, Third Revised Edition, after giving certain information regarding the planets, as follows:

"You might add that Venus is in her last Round."

By this recent astronomical discovery I will now endeavor to show that this statement is corroborated.

It has been known for some years that the principal factor in the evolution of the Solar system, as also in the evolution of stellar systems, is what is called the "tidal-friction" factor. The theory which has elaborated this tidal friction factor is probably the most important in the whole range of scientific philosophy. As a contribution to mathematical physics it ranks alongside of Maxwell's electro-magnetic theory of light. Its complete working out is due to Prof. Geo. H. Darwin and Prof. T. J. J. See. Prof. Darwin made a special study of that Earth-Moon-Sun system, and Prof. See has applied the theory to the evolution of stellar systems. The primary idea underlying the Earth-Moon-Sun system is that the tides caused by the mutual attraction of the earth and moon and sun are constantly changing the character and motions of these bodies. Oceanic tides have this effect, though, according to the theory, it is not necessary to confine the action to oceanic tides. Bodily tides will be produced in the masses by the tidal distortion, providing the masses are not absolutely rigid, and a retardating effect will be set up in these bodies, which will produce a gradual diminution of their rotational velocity, the rotational motion being transformed into heat which is dissipated into space.

The moon constantly tends to raise a tidal bulge on each of the two opposite sides of the earth that are directly in the line that passes through the earth's center and the moon's center. Owing to the fact that the earth is not an ideal perfectly elastic solid, but a fluid of great viscosity, and to the fact that the moon does not remain constantly directly over one given point on the earth's surface, and to the fact that the earth rotates on its axis from west to east many times faster than the moon revolves from west to east round the earth, the tidal bulge that the moon tends

to raise at the point on the earth directly beneath the moon at a given instant of time, is delayed by the counter force of frictional resistance, until the given point has been carried by the swift rotation of the earth ahead to the east of the moon's position. The effect of this is not only to make the moon travel along faster in her path, but—according to the law that action and reaction are equal and opposite in direction, and that the moment of momentum in a system of bodies remains constant while the moon's motion is being accelerated by the tides of the earth—the moon reacts by holding back on the earth's tidal bulge, and this holding back slows up the earth's rotation, and generates heat in the earth through the resistance to the motion of the tidal bulges from east to west in opposition to the earth's rotation from west to east. The earth thus revolves inside a tidal friction brake. This tidal friction both slows the earth's rotation, the motion so lost passing into heat, and constantly increases the length of the day, and at the same time tends to increase the speed of the moon's orbital motion. Darwin's Earth-Moon system was, of course, figured out in its application to the earth on the oceanic tide basis, though his general work has reference mainly to internal bodily tides. He shows that the potency of the tidal friction varies theoretically as the seventh power of the distance of the tide-raising body.

The theory as worked out by Darwin shows that the retardational effect on the velocity of the axial rotation of the planets will finally produce the condition that the revolution of the planets on their axes will be performed in the same time as their orbital revolutions round their tide-producing body or bodies, or in the same time as the revolution of the tide-producing bodies round their planets. There has, therefore, been going on in the case of the earth and the other planets of the Solar system a gradual retardation of their axial rotational velocity, due to this factor of tidal friction. In the case of the earth the process will eventually end in the length of our day being the same as the lunar month. The rate at which the earth is losing speed due to this cause, according to the calculations of Lord Kelvin, is 22 seconds per century. In discussing this question in one of his

Presidential addresses in "Geology and General Physics," Lord Kelvin says:

'The conclusion is, that since the 19th day of March, 721 B. C., a day on which an eclipse of the moon was seen in Babylon, commencing 'when one hour after her rising was fully passed' the earth has lost rather more than one three-millionth of her rotational velocity, or, as a time-keeper, is going slower by $11\frac{1}{2}$ seconds per annum now than then. According to this rate of retardation, if uniform, the earth at the end of a century would, as a timekeeper, be found 22 seconds behind a perfect clock rated and set to agree with her at the beginning of the century.'

If we find then in our Solar system a planet or planets whose length of day is the same as their period of orbital revolution round their tide-producing body, or whose length of day is the same as the period of orbital revolution of the tide producing body round the planet, it is legitimate to conclude that the process of tidal friction has been going on for a much longer time than in the case of our earth, and that the planet must be a very much older member of our system than our earth is.

Now, according to Lowell's recent discoveries, this is the case with Mercury and Venus. Both these planets perform their axial rotation in the same time as their orbital revolution round the sun, Mercury in 87.9 days and Venus in 224.7 days. According to the theory, the tidal friction factor operates whether the tides be oceanic or whether they be bodily tides of the planet, so that the question as to whether Venus possesses fluid oceans like the earth, does not change the case, providing the planet is viscous, or is not rigid, and we know that in the case of Venus her density is not so great as the earth, being only 0.89.

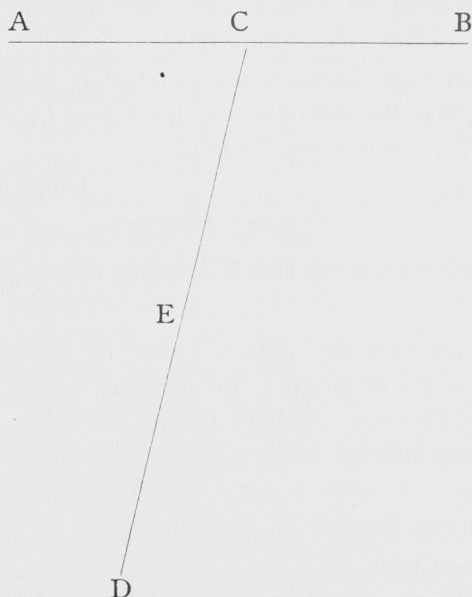
It would seem then, according to this theory, that Venus must be much older than the earth; she is more advanced in her evolutionary career, inasmuch as this physical evolutionary factor has produced identity in the periods of her axial and orbital revolution. Venus having no moon or moons, her tide-producing body is the sun, and in that case the length of her day would eventually become identical with her period of revolution round the sun.

Now, each visible planet, according to the teachings of Theosophy is one in a chain of seven, the other six of each chain being

on different planes, and therefore invisible to the physical senses, and each chain of seven planets in its evolutionary career goes through seven Rounds, the time required for the completion of these Rounds occupying vast periods of time, amounting to hundreds of millions of years. Theosophy teaches that our Earth is now in the middle of her fourth Round, and the planet Venus, according to the statement from the Master quoted at the beginning of this article, is in her seventh or last Round.

Here, then, we have a remarkable corroboration from the most recent astronomical discoveries, which goes to show that Venus is indeed in a much more advanced evolutionary stage than the Earth. Her day can become no longer, as it is identical with her period of orbital revolution round her tide-producing body. So far as Venus is concerned, this physical evolutionary factor of tidal friction must have ceased; and when an evolutionary factor has ceased to operate, it would seem that the body upon which it has been operating has evolved to its utmost limit under the present conditions, and if the body has a life history, a definite career, a beginning and an end, it must then be passing through its last stage; or, as Theosophy says, it must then be in its last Round, and transferring its energy to another laya center. This laya center takes up the energy of the old body, and a new evolutionary center is formed on a higher level. The mathematical theory I have outlined, states that the rotational energy of motion is by the friction gradually transformed into heat, which is dissipated into space. Where that energy goes, science of course is unable to state; but it is perfectly certain, according to the principle of the conservation of energy, that it cannot be lost. Theosophy provides for its reconcentration in what is called a laya center. All the material bodies of the universe are thus dissipating their energy into space; they are "running down" as it were, and as they grow old this energy departs from them and leaves them lifeless. But if the law of economy pervades the material universe, as it must and does of necessity pervade it, the law of economy being but the law of conservation, then this energy must be gathered into new centers of evolutionary activity, and produce higher and higher forms in the great cosmic process. It does not follow that this laya center has at first to be necessarily in an-

other material body. It may be at a point where the eye sees nothing. We know that the center of mass of two or more material bodies, or the point where the gravitational energy of the bodies is concentrated, and from which point the bodies act on another body external to the particular system, need not necessarily be in any of the bodies. If we have two bodies under consideration, A and B, their center of mass will lie in a point in the line joining them,—at C if the bodies are equal in mass—the place where the point is located in the line depending on the relative masses of the bodies. This point is the center of mass of two bodies. In this point in empty space, the gravitational energy of both bodies is concentrated, and it is from this point the bodies act upon another body, external to the system of the two bodies. By drawing another line, joining the center of mass of the two bodies with the third body D, we can then find a new center of



mass of the three bodies at E, and from this new center of mass, the three bodies will affect a fourth body external to the system of the three bodies, and so on; in this manner we could, by finding new centers of mass and extending our system, gradually

find the center of mass of the material universe. We see then that a laya center need not necessarily be in a material body; the energy can be concentrated at a point in what is apparently to us empty space.

Now, as the evolution of the organic is dependent on physical conditions, or on the conditions of the inorganic, which underlies it, and as the further evolution of the inorganic has ceased in the case of Venus in one of its principal factors, then it would appear that the evolution of the organic, or of life-forms upon Venus must also be largely affected by these conditions; and, as science has shown that the physical conditions are the principal factors in the evolution of life-forms, then if the physical conditions have ceased to change or evolve, the life forms also cease to undergo modifications due to environment, and one of their principal factors of evolution is taken away. Theosophy states that evolution of life-forms has ceased on Venus, the monads have completed their evolutionary career on Venus, and they have now to seek new and higher conditions on another level.

We are, therefore, driven to the conclusion, from an inductive investigation, that the statement in the *Secret Doctrine* is correct, viz., that Venus is in her last Round.

JOHN MACKENZIE.

India and the Closing Cycle.

In connection with the details given in MERCURY (May, p., 263, 271), about the calamities the Hindus expect for the world, but especially for their country, during the closing years of the present cycle, it may be interesting to publish an extract from a letter just received from a very intelligent and devoted Parsi writer of Bombay, Brother N. F. Bilimoria:

“We are now doing better here, as the plague has at last abated, after a year’s duration. But, on the 14th of June, Calcutta suffered by a tremendous shock of earthquake, with happily only little loss of life, although it lasted over 5 minutes; but the property and other losses are great, the city appearing as a bombarded ruin. In the meanwhile the famine still continues.” . . .

If we take into consideration the abnormal combination of visitations now weighing over that unfortunate country, viz.: famine, pest, earthquakes, drought and political ferment threatening a terrible revolt and civil war, we may well ask whether the Hindus are not somewhat justified in believing the predictions concerning this critical period, and also ask, with Mr. Bilimoria, "What further is in store for India during these next few years of the closing cycle," if they are to go from bad to worse as predicted!!

THE FORUM DEPARTMENT.

Any person can send questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon Theosophical subjects. When necessary, the various communications will be condensed by the editor. Be careful to write only on one side of the paper.

QUESTION CCCLXIV.

In the May number of MERCURY it is said that the precessional year starts in its Cancer month. How does the writer figure this out, and what are his authorities?

A. M.—The authority is found in H. P. B.'s *Secret Doctrine* by working out the cautious hints she gives on Cycles. She says that Masters of Esoteric knowledge do not feel at liberty to give out all the details; but in this, as in the matter of the number of reincarnations for each Monad, we are allowed to work out the matter as best we can and, if we find the correct solutions, to use them. The subject, however, of the Cancer month being intimately connected, not only with the Precessional Year, but also with the still more occult cycle of the Polar Precession, which is the true cycle "governing the destinies of Nations and Races," the writer hopes to soon present the subject to the readers of MERCURY, in a special article.

QUESTION CCCLXV.

To what extent—if at all—does Theosophy accept the doctrine of Heredity, or how could Heredity agree with Karma?

B.B.—Theosophy accepts the doctrine of heredity, just to that extent as is in accordance with the FACTS in the universe. Then also the different exponents of Theosophy accept or reject it in

proportion only, to their understanding of these facts in Nature

Heredity—as my understanding of Theosophy makes me look upon it—is true as an EFFECT and not as A CAUSE; and this even only on the physical plane and generally, but not universally or exclusively. Or, rather, it is a regulative CONDITION for the working out of Karma on the physical plane. We do certainly get many things, as of RIGHT belonging to us from our parents and ancestors. That is a fact, a result. But that fact of mere inheritance is in itself no reason of it. When we mention Heredity, the reason of the thing is never explained, which is the inviolable law of causal sequence or Karma. In other words, as Madame Blavatsky has it, Heredity is the servant of the Law of Karma. We inherit or come to possess from parents or ancestors only just what we deserve to possess. On the other and transcendental planes, also, we get just what we deserve. On the physical, if a person, by his Karma, deserves, let us say, a strong physical body, the administrators of Karma sends such a person to the family, where, consistently with other Karmic links of previous incarnations (links that determine our family relations), he can get a strong body. Or say, a person deserves a fine vocal organ and all that is necessary for the development of musical nature in him, by his past Karma, and the lords of Karma, send such a man to be born in a family of musicians and singers, where his place has also been determined by other Karmic links. Now, those who see only the PHENOMENON, or the fact of his getting the refined vocal organ from the parents, speak of it as HEREDITY, entirely overlooking the whole sphere of NOUMENON and all the determining causes or Karma that bring about such a phenomenon or fact.

Let us give an illustration: Suppose a boy shows signs of great mathematical talents and the parents, thinking that he DESERVES a good mathematical education, send him to a university, say Cambridge, where he can get it best, also where he can be sent consistently with his other circumstances. There he gets a fine education and comes out a mathematician. Will it be correct to say that the CAUSE of his mathematical culture is the fact that he INHERITS it from the Cambridge University? The University is, no doubt, a condition, the principal one, for the bringing about

of the effect, but the cause is in the DESERVING of the boy. Or, to give a more PHYSICAL illustration, suppose somebody deserves by his merit some reward, some money from you; and you having accounts in many banks, send him to that particular bank, which is nearer to his home than others, or is in other ways more convenient for him to go to. He gets the money there. Shall we say that the CAUSE of his getting the money is the FACT OF HIS GETTING it from the bank? It is the same sort of argument when we say that the cause of our inheriting a particular kind of physical body or other material conditions is HEREDITY, *i. e.*, the fact of our inheriting it or receiving it from our parents, in other words, the cause of *A* is *A*, and that alone.

Thus it is that Heredity is true, as an effect, not as a cause. Its real cause is Karma or the merit and demerit of the person who inherits physical circumstances from parents and ancestors, whatever they may be. Karma rules Heredity.

QUESTIONS TO BE DEALT WITH IN THE NEXT AND SUBSEQUENT
ISSUES OF THE FORUM.

1. *In an article by H. P. B., in Vahan No. 1, occurs the following: "Unless we succeed in placing the T. S. before this date (1897-98) on the safe side of the spiritual current, it will be swept away into the deep called 'Failure,' and the cold waves of oblivion will close over its doomed head." What is to be understood by this, are the Masters still working with the Society, or have they already withdrawn their help?*

2. *According to Theosophical writings the Ego merely overshadows the child until seven years of age. What different relation does the Ego bear to the child than that born to the adult, and what effect does this different relationship have on the personality?*

3. *In many Theosophical writings I find statements somewhat as follows: With the physical and moral decline of races come atmospheric disturbances and terrestrial cataclysms, while (without being able to satisfactorily say why) I believe this to be the case, I should like an occult explanation showing how this is brought about.*

4. *The seeming inequalities of human life are, according to the exponents of Karma, the results of previous lives; pleasure and pain in one incarnation being merely effects of causes generated in another. Animals, we are told, do not make Karma, yet we see them existing under similar diversified conditions, some starved and beaten, others pampered and admired.*

In the case of human beings we submit to an inevitable law which bears the stamp of reason and justice, but how can we recognize the sufferings of animals with the idea of a presiding intelligence whose chief attributes are mercy and justice?.

Answers should be sent in as soon as possible.

T. S. ECHOES.

LECTURE TOUR OF MRS. ANNIE BESANT.

TO THE EDITOR OF MERCURY:

Chicago, July 14th.—A run of over twenty hours from Sheridan brought us early on Saturday morning, June 19th, to Grand Island, Nebraska. Mrs. Besant lectured that evening and the next day passed on to Lincoln, whilst the Countess went direct to Chicago. In spite of the want of air in the Lincoln Universalist Church, it was packed both on Sunday and Monday, and the drawing room meetings at Mrs. Holmes were also crowded. Some people joined the Society, and a class was forming when we left on Tuesday for Omaha, where Dr. and Mrs. Jensen made their hospitable house our home and, in many ways, proved their strong interest in the Theosophical Society. A reception was held for Mrs. Besant by a prominent Woman's Club in Omaha the same afternoon and that evening and the evening following, lectures on "Man, the Master of His Destiny" and "Theosophy and Its Teachings" were delivered in the Opera House to a fair audience—thinned by the heat which had driven many people from the town to the country.

On Friday evening, after an afternoon parlor talk, Mrs. Besant crossed the Missouri river on the electric car line and lectured in Council Bluffs, returning with Dr. and Mrs. Jensen to Omaha for the night; the next afternoon we left for Chicago, feeling sure that before long the small lodge she had formed in Omaha would attract to itself some of the more thoughtful people of the town, and become a strong and useful center of work.

On Saturday, June 26th, we reached the goal of the first half of our journeys—Chicago—and were conducted to the rooms of the Theosophical Society in Van Buren street, where a reception was given to Mrs. Besant and the Countess in the evening. The next morning, Sunday, June 27th, the American Section held its 11th Annual Convention. Many delegates and members were present and the other Sections were represented either by delegates or letters and telegrams of greeting. Mr. Fullerton called the Convention to order shortly after 10 o'clock, and Mr. George Wright was elected its Chairman.

Mr. Chidester extended a warm welcome to the foreign delegates, and Mrs. Besant, after a sketch of the work in India and Europe, spoke of the new literature which is of such value to the usefulness of the Society, and laid stress upon the duty of members to perfect themselves in the knowledge of the fundamental teachings of the Wisdom Religion that they may be ready to give help to those who enquire. "No movement that is ignorant *can* live," she said, "and no movement that is ignorant *ought* to live. The Masters are the Masters of Compassion, but They are the Masters of Wisdom as well!"

The General Secretary's Report showed great increase in the Society—36 Lodges against 7 last year—and in the discussion which followed it was remarked that much of the new membership was due to the unwearied travels of the Countess Wachtmeister and to the present tour of Mrs. Besant. The Countess pointed out that this propaganda work was of great importance, and ways and means were discussed whereby lecturers could be found to go round to help the young lodges in their studies and to interest the public at large. One hundred dollars were voted from the treasury, the nucleus of a fund to be devoted to this purpose, and committees of propaganda will be formed in the various districts.

A committee likely to be productive of much good was one formed to draw up plans of study for the use of lodges and to advise upon methods of work. Mrs. Besant was asked to give her valuable aid in drawing up the plan, which considers the needs of young lodges and also of more advanced students—thus a great want will be supplied.

The necessity for a list of the names of people interested in Theosophy in the various towns of America was recognized and volunteers were deputed to make it. Much time will be saved by such an arrangement and all members are requested to help by sending in names to Mrs. Helen J. Dennis at the Headquarters in Chicago.

Various other schemes to forward the movement were mooted and some adopted, and others referred to committees for consideration. The support required to keep up MERCURY was stated by the Count Axel Wachtmeister, who had acted for some time as editor, and could speak from personal knowledge of the financial strain upon Mr. Walters involved by the printing of the helpful little magazine. It was pointed out by one member that a periodical which receives the support of the Section should be of first-rate ability and contain articles by the leading writers in the movement, as well as notes of all the activities, so that members would naturally subscribe to it to keep themselves in touch with the life of the Section.

After a busy day, the Convention adjourned until the evening, when a public meeting was held in Steinway Hall, and addresses were given by Mr. George Wright, Mr. Fullerton, the Countess Wachtmeister, Mrs. Besant, and others. The hall was tightly packed with people who listened to the speakers with the greatest attention. When all was over the members congratulated each other on the great success of the Convention, which was harmonious and resolute for progress, and they parted with the brightest hopes for the future of the American Section—hopes justified by the interest of the public and by the presence in American cities, throughout the length and breadth of the land, of earnest and devoted souls, whose one object is to help forward the great movement to which they have given their lives.

The following fortnight was one of incessant work and it speaks well for the interest of the people that all classes and receptions, etc., were crowded, in spite of the fact that Chicago was suffering from a heat wave and the thermometer between 90° and 100° in the shade did not render close rooms attractive to those who were not in earnest!

Mrs. Besant held morning classes for the instruction of members, and afternoon and evening receptions and lectures for the public, besides very many private interviews. The lectures were given in different parts of the town, that all might have an opportunity to hear.

The attention shown was most encouraging, and a great many new members joined one or other of the four lodges already existing there: The Chicago Lodge, the Englewood White Lodge, the Shila and the Eastern Psychology.

There is much to be hoped for in the work of the next few years in Chicago.

A. J. W.

Theosophical Work.

TO THE EDITOR OF MERCURY.—*Dear Sir:*

The growing strength of the American Section calls for a more complete organization of its energies than it at present enjoys, and nothing is more urgently needed than the establishment of Committees for the direction and aid of propagandist work.

The Central States Committee is now being constituted in Chicago; there is a nucleus of a Pacific Coast Committee at San Francisco; Miss Ida Wright of Tacoma has undertaken the task of organizing a Northwestern States Committee, and we trust to hear soon of the establishment of an Eastern States Committee with its centre at Washington. Each Committee consists of a representative elected by each Lodge in its territorial district, and a further representative for each 10, or part of 10, Lodge members (or for each 20, as is thought best.) This Committee elects from its number a small Executive, living in the central town, for the discharge of routine and office work. The Committee has a list of the lodges of its district, of the members at large, and of all persons interested in Theosophy—so far as their names and addresses can be obtained. It gathers together a corps of correspondents, capable of answering questions, and assigns to each his quota of work, attaching him as correspondents to a lodge, or to various scattered students. Members-at-large, when well instructed, should be utilized for this work. It maps out tours for visiting lecturers, and as funds permit, has two or three lecturers constantly engaged in local work. It “mothers” new lodges, till they are able to stand alone, sending down a teacher for some weeks to help their early studies. It circulates papers, lectures, plans of all kinds, through its district, energizing every part. It receives and administers funds, whether those sent from the central propaganda fund or those contributed locally for propagandist purposes.

A new activity has just been started, the idea of which was borrowed from our Australian brothers in their last Convention. Each Committee should have at its disposal a number of book-boxes, to lend to branches. A selection of elementary books is made, and a strong wooden box, with lock and key, is constructed to exactly fit them. This box is lent to a new lodge for two months, and is then passed on to another. A similar selection of more advanced books follows, to be retained for three months, and then passed on. A third might follow, to be retained for seven months, and thus a year's study would be provided. Boxes I and II are already provided to the number of six of each; four boxes are being placed in the hands of the Central States and four in those of the Pacific Coast

Committees ; two of each go to the North-western and the Eastern States Committee. They contain:

LENDING LIBRARY BOX I.

Manuals. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,—The Ancient Wisdom,—Esoteric Buddhism,—Birth and Evolution of the Soul,—In the Outer Court,—Voice of the Silence, (cloth),—Bhagavad Gita,—Light on the Path.

LENDING LIBRARY BOX II.

Key to Theosophy,—Growth of the Soul,—Building of the Kosmos,—Self and its Sheaths,—Plotinus,—Orpheus,—Four Great Religions,—Upanishads, 2 vols., (cloth),—Path of Discipleship,—First Steps in Occultism,—Three Paths to Union.

LENDING LIBRARY BOX III.

The Secret Doctrine, 3 vols., and index,—Isis Unveiled,—Pistis Sophia,—The Esoteric Writings of T. Subba Rao.

With regard to Lodge subscriptions, a plan adopted with much success in the Chicago Lodge merits consideration. It has abolished compulsory Lodge dues, and every member states what he will contribute per month (or per week). The poorest may contribute only 5 cents a month, or even nothing, but there is no upward limit; thus the subscription becomes a voluntary offering, and the poorest will soon find that he can spare a car-fare a week and not miss it, if it be given regularly. To facilitate book-keeping, a Lodge should issue a cheap card to every member on entering, in the following form:

..... LODGE T. S.

MEMBER'S CARD, 189.....

M

January	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
February	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
March	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
April	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
May	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
June	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
July	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
August	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
September	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
October	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
November	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
December	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

The amount of subscription per week or month is written on the left-hand top corner, and the name of the member is also written, below "member's card."

When the member brings his weekly or monthly subscription, the Secretary writes his initials in the corresponding weekly or monthly space. Once in three months, or in six, the cards are handed in to Secretary and he posts the total in his book. This plan is suggested by an old trades-union experience, for in this way a Secretary can easily keep in order the weekly payments of some thousands of members; a trades-union Secretary has also his own weekly book into which he enters the subscriptions as paid. Many of us believe that this system of weekly or monthly subscription, the amount being fixed by the member himself, would very much increase both the membership and the financial resources of the Lodges. This arrangement, of course, leaves untouched the annual due of \$1 a year to the Section, and the entrance fee of 50 cents.

If every member of the Section will take advantage of the great flood of energy now pouring into it, we shall have to announce at our next Convention a roll of a hundred Lodges and a couple of thousand members.

ANNIE BESANT.

ANNUAL CONVENTION

of the American Section of the Theosophical Society.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS.

The 11th Annual Convention of the American Section of the T. S. was called to order at 10 o'clock Tuesday morning, June 27th, 1897. The Assembly was held at the Headquarters of the Society in Chicago at the Atheneum Building, No. 26 Van Buren street.

According to custom the General Secretary, Mr. Alexander Fullerton, called the meeting to order. Miss Pauline G. Kelly was elected Secretary of the Convention and Mr. D. D. Chidester temporary Chairman. After the acceptance of the report of the Committee on Credentials and the recognition of delegates to the Convention, Mr. George E. Wright was re-elected permanent Chairman of the body. We were so fortunate as to have with us Mrs. Annie Besant, Countess Wachtmeister and Miss Willson, representing respectively the European and Indian Sections, the Scandinavian and lately-formed Dutch Section. Mrs. Besant gave a very full report of the work in the European and Indian Sections during the past 12 months. The official report had come to Countess Wachtmeister of the Scandinavian Section, but she asked Count Axel Wachtmeister to tell what he personally knew concerning the work of our

Northern brothers. This was followed by a report by Miss Willson of the Dutch Section; these reports all show increased vigor in T. S. work, especially along the literary line. Much of great value has been added to the literature of the Theosophical Society, and by this channel the thoughtful and educated classes are reached.

During the afternoon session the following officers were elected: General Secretary and Treasurer, Alexander Fullerton of New York.

Executive Committee—Mr. George E. Wright, Mrs. Kate B. Davis, Mr. William John Walters, Mr. F. E. Titus, Alexander Fullerton.

Councillors—Mrs. Edith Sears. Mr. A. S. Brolley, Dr. Elizabeth W. Chidester, Mr. R. A. Burnett, Miss Marie A. Walsh, Mr. John F. Crawford, Mrs. Sarah J. E. Jolley, Mr. Lyman Gibbs, Mr. T. E. Gould, Mrs. Ida R. Patch, Mr. George Masfore Willis, Dr. J. W. B. La Pierre, Mrs. Louise Thomas, Mrs. John M. Bagley.

A very strong plea for help of all kinds to be given to MERCURY was made by Countess Wachtmeister, Count Wachtmeister and Mrs. Kate Buffington-Davis, resulting in a resolution accepted by the Convention, allowing \$100.00 from the general funds of the Society to be used by the General Secretary in sending out copies of MERCURY, as propaganda work.

By two other resolutions adopted by the body assembled two new committees were formed: One consisting of three students in Theosophy, assisted by Mrs. Besant, to arrange a course and methods of study and reading to be pursued by newly-formed Branches. The other consisting of five members in Chicago Branches to procure names and addresses of all persons interested in Theosophy, its work and literature and to preserve this list in a book at the Headquarters in Chicago. This list is specially to facilitate propaganda work and the resolution was suggested by the Countess Wachtmeister. After routine work the body adjourned until 8 o'clock. The evening session was held at Steinway Hall and the house was crowded. Addresses were made by the principal delegates as follows: Mr. George Wright, President of the Chicago Branch, and permanent Chairman of the Convention, called the meeting to order, and in his opening remarks alluded to the relations of Science to Theosophy and to the later development in the Modern Scientific World by which Theosophic teachings were demonstrated. Mrs. Edith Sears addressed the Convention on "Theosophy and the Christ-life," Mr. Alexander Fullerton, "The Gauge of Spirituality," followed by Mr. F. E. Titus of Toronto on "Karma," Mr. A. J. Corey of Washington, D. C., spoke on "Practical Work," The Countess Wachtmeister on "Reincarnation," and the 11th Annual Convention of the American Section of the T. S. closed with a stirring address of Mrs. Besant on "The Theosophical Movement."

PAULINE G. KELLY, Sec'y.

LOS ANGELES, July 15th.—Harmony Lodge, T. S., is having the pleasure and benefit of a four weeks' visit from Miss Marie A. Walsh, who is too well known as an efficient lecturer and writer to need any introduction to the readers of MERCURY. Miss Walsh is having daily afternoon classes in addition to the usual evening lecture or study class, and her work being to a great extent amongst those who have not known much of our Theosophical teachings, has been the means of bringing Harmony Lodge into considerable notice. Several new members have already been enrolled, and a further increase is expected. The Secret Doctrine Class, often a trial to some of us, has under Miss Walsh's direction been a source of profit and delight. She will probably remain here until the 20th of this month, when she leaves for San Francisco, the Brahmacharin Bodhabhikshu, taking her place. A very enjoyable "Book Social" was held last week at the residence of Mrs. Virginia Moon, one of the members of the Lodge, for the purpose of raising funds to add to the Lending Library.

HATTIE RANDOLPH, Sec'y.

SAN DIEGO, July 13th.—During Mrs. Besant's visit here she organized the H. P. B. Branch with seventeen charter members. We have been making rather slow progress owing to the strong forces against us, but the arrival of the Brahmacharin has given us a new impetus and his teachings are attracting universal attention. We are pleased to say that at his first public lecture on the "Basis of Brotherhood" held in the Unity Hall, it was crowded to overflowing, people even standing out on the sidewalk. The Brahmacharin we hope will remain with us even longer than the given time and we hope, through his efforts to overcome the adverse influences and build up a branch whose influence may be felt throughout the country. We can well understand how greatly you must miss his companionship from your Branch in San Francisco. The officers of our Branch are Mrs. Anna F. Smith, President; Miss Mary Healy, Vice-President; Chas. Carter, Treasurer; Miss Louise C. Hilborn, Secretary; Edward Miester, Librarian.

LOUISE C. HEILBORN, Sec'y.

CHICAGO BRANCH, July 10th.—The Headquarters here have been like a beehive during the past two weeks. Mrs. Besant's visit has brought great energy to this centre; new life has been put in our veins and fresh thoughts have come into our minds. Mrs. Besant's lectures have been very well attended. The one given at Central Music Hall, June 28th, on "Man's Invisible Bodies," attracted a splendid audience that filled the big hall. The newspapers have been very kind to us, unusually so, and through these mediums the "good news" has been carried to many. Mrs. Besant lectured in various churches in the different parts of the city, and

everywhere has met with great courtesy and warm attention. Countess Wachtmeister has been very active in recruiting work, and we have gained many new members in the Chicago Branch during her stay. Mrs. Besant and the Countess with Miss Willson leave on Monday, the 12th, for a trip North and then East to New York. Count Axel Wachtmeister left in advance last Wednesday. I want the readers of MERCURY to assist in the work to be carried on by a Committee appointed during the Convention. This Committee is composed of five members of Chicago Branches and is to collect the names and addresses of all people interested in Theosophy, its work and literature. These names are to be collected in a book to be kept at Headquarters in Chicago and used in propaganda work. Now, will any reader of MERCURY, knowing such names and addresses—either in this country or any other—send them to Mrs. Helen I. Dennis, No. 426 Atheneum Building, 26 Van Buren street, Chicago, Chairman of the Committee, and we *i. e.*, the Committee will be deeply indebted to you for this assistance. We feel that Karma has wrought well for us this month. The turning of the wheel has brought light, wisdom, courage and renewed strength to fight on. P. G. K.

SPOKANE, WASH., June 11th. — Our Olympus Lodge for the month of May kept Theosophy well before the public. We had some very hot weather during May, and the attendance at our public meetings fell off somewhat as compared with the previous months. With the first Sunday in May we changed the hour of our meeting from 3 P. M. to 7:30 P. M. On May 2d, Professor John Mackenzie lectured on "Evolution and Theosophy," showing how science in its latest enunciations is coming to a Theosophical basis; on May 9th, Mr. Joseph Cullen, Vice-President, lectured on "Circumstances a Test of Character, or of Soul Development;" on May 16th, Prof. Mackenzie lectured on "The Growth of the Soul," showing that reincarnation was the theory of evolution applied to the Soul; on May 23d, the Count Wachtmeister, who was in the city over Sunday, delivered an able lecture on "Dreams." The Oliver Hall was packed to the door to hear the Count, though it was a hot, sultry evening; on May 30th, President Mackenzie lectured on "The Human Aura and Thought Forms." At all these lectures a large number of questions were asked by various individuals present. The Count Wachtmeister was in the city from the 19th till the 24th, arranging for Mrs. Besant's lectures. We enjoyed his visit very much, and derived much benefit from an interchange of ideas. We anticipate much profit and pleasure from Mrs. Besant's lectures, which will be given on the 6th, 7th and 8th of July in Auditorium Hall.

JOHN MACKENZIE.

SEATTLE, July 8th.—Ananda Lodge continues in a prosperous condition. Some new books have been purchased and others donated to the Library. The lodge room has been made more attractive by the addition of pictures and furniture. Many of the new members are earnestly studying the manuals, and much interest is shown by the increased attendance at the meetings. Some excellent papers were presented during the month on "The Growth of the Soul," "The New Era," and "The Dual Nature of Man." Many of the members out of the city are diligently working to present the truths of Theosophy to their friends, by holding meetings at their homes, thus forming the nucleus of future organizations.

HARRIET C. STEIN, Cor. Sec'y.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 5th.—We are nearing the close of an important portion of the cycle, and it means so much to us—either to enter into the higher plane of thought and real life, or to go back into the darkness of the past. Therefore let us stand together and reach out to help all humanity in every direction. We feel the necessity of disseminating the great truth of scientific psychological philosophy to the world, so that we may be able to reason from cause to effect. We hope some one will think and bring to the attention of the Convention the fact that we sadly need speakers and workers to disseminate our philosophy. We would also like to see our worthy General Secretary move his Headquarters from New York to Washington. New York is not an esoteric center, and we do not think it will be in this decade. Let us send out thoughts as well as earnest workers so that the new era may be all that the Masters desire. Their work must be done.

ANNA M. JAQUESS.

STREATOR, ILL., July 17th.—This has been an eventful week for the members of the local Branch. Mrs. Annie Besant, accompanied by the Countess Wachtmeister, arrived in the city, July 12th, and were the guests of Colonel and Mrs. Ralph Plumb. Their surroundings were unusually congenial, and they enjoyed a much-needed rest. On July 14th and 15th, Mrs. Besant delivered two lectures on "What is Theosophy?" and "Life After Death." She also held two afternoon conversations. Quite a large number of people availed themselves of the privilege of listening to the distinguished Theosophist. They were exceedingly interested and the members feel that additions to the Society will follow. This Branch has suspended active work until the first week in October.

GEO. GOULDING, Sec'y.

HONOLULU, June 30th.—At a recent meeting of Aloha Branch T. S. the following officers were elected to serve during the ensuing year: Geo.

W. Smith, President; Wm. R. Sims, Secretary; Augustus Sharp, Treasurer; J. F. C. Abel, Librarian, these officers constituting the Executive Committee of the Branch; the members regret exceedingly their inability to retain the former President, Prof. Marques, in office in the Branch on account of his absence. The members meet regularly Tuesday evenings, under the leadership of Mr. Smith, and have lately undertaken a systematic review of the fundamental literature of Theosophy.

WM. R. SIMS, Sec'y.

NEW ZEALAND SECTION.—The General Secretary left New Zealand last May on her lecturing tour in Australia, and will be busy there for the next three months or more. There is nothing further of special interest to report; the Branches in Dunedin, Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch continue active public work, and their membership increases. The number of "unattached" members is also increasing. They are scattered all over the country, and in course of time will no doubt form centers of Theosophical activity.

JULY — The chief interest in this Section at present is the approaching visit of Col. Olcott, who is now in Australia, and will probably accompany Miss Edger when she returns to New Zealand in August. As this is the first visit of the President Founder to this country, it is looked forward to with much interest. Activities continue as usual at all our Branches, Christchurch displaying its accustomed energy. In Auckland, Mr. S. Stuart lectured recently on "The Cycles of Theosophy," and at the same place Mr. C. H. Baly gave an interesting and scholarly lecture on "The Sanskrit Language and Literature." The annual meeting of the Christchurch Branch was held on May 18th. The report showed the Branch to be in a flourishing condition. Mr. J. B. Wither was elected President, and Mr. J. McCombs (3. York St., Christchurch), Secretary. Wellington Branch held its annual meeting the same month. Mr. Gibson was re-elected President, and Mr. James Davidson (23 Owen St., Newtown, Wellington), Secretary.

F. D.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., August. — During the months of June and July, the Golden Gate Lodge has had its usual number of meetings, and well attended public lectures have been given every Sunday evening, at the Portola Hall, the subjects being as follows: "Reincarnation," "Karma," "Christ in the Hindu Light," "Christianity and Buddhism in Relation to Brahminism." and "The Women of India—Past and Present," by the Brahmacharin Bodhabikshu, "A Rough Outline of Theosophy," by Mrs. A. Best; "Whom Did Jesus Worship," by Mr. W. C. Bailey; "Some Dangers which Threaten Society," by Mr. W. J. Walters, and "Heredity and Right Living," by Mr. W. C. Bailey.

BOOK REVIEWS.

LUCIFER, July—The "Watchtower," this time takes the form of an editorial, the subject being a critical review of H. P. B.'s Third Volume of the SECRET DOCTRINE, and it is written in one of Mr. Mead's best strains. The criticisms on the new volume are sharp, but just and true; but they are perhaps a little too severe in what concerns the literary merit of the first two volumes. H. P. B.'s style and methods may have been—and where—very faulty, but nobody has yet been found capable of doing even a portion of what she did, so that while we must avoid falling into the excess of making a "Scripture" out of her SECRET DOCTRINE, yet we also must not forget that it is the ONLY, UNIQUE, book we yet possess that contains anything reliable on the truths of this new dispensation of Theosophy. Therefore, with due respect to Mr. Mead, the "Ipse dixit" of the SECRET DOCTRINE must, of necessity, remain the "arbiter of Theosophical discussions," until we get something better written and more authoritative; and we hope that some day Mr. Mead—when through with his Greek work—may be called upon, by Those who know, to give us another installment of SECRET DOCTRINE Verities. Mrs. Besant's "Reincarnation" is now concluded, and so are Miss Ward's "Authority," and Mr. Leadbeater's "Akâshic Records." "Among the Gnostics of the First Two Centuries" does not seem yet near the end. Dr. A. A. Wells gives, on the "Order of Things," the best article he has yet written, in which he shows, to the probable astonishment of the ordinary modern Christian, that all was not bad in the world, when Christianity started, and that the new religion—by capsizing the then established and respectable "order of things"—was at first received "with horror and disgust," as the "Enemy of Humanity." And when we reflect on the crimes committed, the blood spilt through those three sister-religions—Jewish, Christian and Mahomedan—the only three that have "plagued" humanity, the HORROR of the Roman "bourgeois" assumes a different aspect, a kind of prophetic one. The gem, however, of this number of LUCIFER is a review by Mr. A. M. Glass, of the remarkable study on the Geometry of Nature, lately published by our Spanish Brother D. Soria Y. Mata, and now explained by himself in SOPHIA. The main conception of this extraordinary work is summarized as follow by Mr. Glass: "The Universe is built through the application of geometrical laws, applying to all forms of life—from the mineral and vegetable up to man himself. The matter is built of ultimate atoms grouped always into geometric forms, these being essentially the five regular solids, which are all combinations of the tetrahedron, the basic figure. By combining these primary figures in every possible symmetrical manner, we arrive at a gradual evolution of form giving us chemical elements and combinations, crystalline bodies, plant, animal, human forms, up to the whole Universe itself, symmetry and regularity being found everywhere essential to life and reproduction."

This gives us a new insight into the unity and, consequently, solidarity of all things; but, after all, it is only a more mathematical presentation of the old Hindu theory of the Tatwas.

INTELLIGENCE, July, gives an excellent picture of the noted Explorer, A. Le Plongeon, whose name ought to be dear to all Americans interested in the past ages of their Continent. Contents: "The Unseen World," A. W. Cross; "Ourselves Critically Considered," Dr. Dowson; "The Rationale of Astrology," J. Hazelrigg, another short but pithy and biblical vindication of the revived science; "Consciousness, Conscience and Being," a good article by C. H. A. Bjerregaard; "Mental Pasturage," H. M. North; "Mirage," P. Avenal; a second chapter of the "Philosophy of the Divine Man," Hudor Genone; some interesting notes by W. H. Galvani, on Fruit in Tradition; "Jezirah, the Mystic Shrine," H. Clay, a mystical romance in which an evidently inexperienced writer offers the anomaly of two Hindoos using the planes of the wretchedly mutilated Hebrew Kabala, instead of their own

beautiful occult system; evidently, Mr. Clay's Hindoos, if real men, were only Egyptian Jews. The number closes with the usual editorial, "World of Thought," varied and interesting. For next issue, we are promised an astrological prediction on McKinley's Administration 1897-1901—the Administration of the most momentous times of the closing cycle—and it will be interesting to watch how Mr. J. Erickson's horoscope will be fulfilled.

NOTES AND QUERIES, July — Brother S. C. Gould, continues successfully to make of his review a most interesting ollapodrida of weird bits of knowledge which defy the reviewer; it must be read, and carefully laid aside for reference, together with the whole of the antecedent XV volumes.

NOVA LUX, June.—"The Ego and Its Vehicle," D. Calvari, continued; Proceedings of the Martinist Lodge "Cerere;" the first part of what promises to be a very interesting, valuable and well-grounded study on "Sintoism" in Japan, by A. Hoffmann; a continuation of "Obscure Points in Spiritism," V. Cavalli; "Hypnotism as a Remedy against Insanity," and Book Reviews.

SOPHIA. — With another sheet of "Atlantis," this number contains the conclusion of "Devachan," and the continuation of "Sankya Philosophy," and of "Historical Varieties;" but the gem is an article entitled "Genesis," by D. A. Soria Y. Mata, in which the gifted author offers the first part of a study on his wonderful researches on the "Polyhedric Origin" of Kosmos, which are attracting the attention of all the mathematicians of Europe. SOPHIA also contains a very impartial and kindly review of Dr. Marques "Human Aura," and concludes by a review of a lecture given in Madrid on "Hindu Theogony," the author of which is courteously shown that he knows next to nothing on the subject.

Received: PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA PURE FOOD CONGRESS, held at San Francisco, May 1st, 1897. A very interesting and suggestive reading for all who are interested in the vital question of pure food, published at Mills' Building, Room 2, Sixth Floor.

THE RATIONALE OF REINCARNATION by William T. James; a very useful synopsis for beginners of all the points bearing on this important question, the literature of which is yet very scant. Pamphlet form, price 5 cents. Address 10 King street, E. Toronto, Canada.

CHROMOPATHY, or science of healing diseases by Colors, by Pandit JWALA PRASAD JHA. Third Edition, Madras, THINKER'S OFFICE. Price, 20 cents. This little pamphlet contains the principle of a complete revolution in medicine, if it does really always accomplish all that the author asserts, after 11 years of practice, which he claims to have been 11 years of success. It will be all the more interesting to American readers, as the process is merely a development of Dr. Babbitt's discoveries and book on Colors, a new edition of which has also been lately published at the College of Finer Forces in Los Angeles.

THE VEGETARIAN COOK BOOK, edited by Mrs. Kate Buffington Davis and Countess Wachtmeister, is now ready, and will be reviewed in the next number of MERCURY.

SECRET DOCTRINE, by H. P. B., the Third and long-delayed Volume, has at last been completed and will be reviewed shortly. Orders for the Volume are received at the MERCURY OFFICE.

“Thou Shalt Not Kill!”

Having received a copy of the *ANIMAL FRIEND* for March, 1897, I was struck with the curious inconsistency of persons proclaiming themselves the protectors of our brothers of the Animal Kingdom, espousing the cause of non-suffering to them with both zeal and warmth, yet, at the same time complacently regarding these same brothers of the lower realm as legitimate and necessary articles of food. Elizabeth Southey writes “that the skins of animals killed for food come under an entirely different category;” has she ever meditated upon the life cut short, and the agony endured by the animals upon whose corpse she and her friends feast? Has it ever impressed itself upon her consciousness that the horror of butchery is so great that, if every man and woman was compelled to be their own butcher, very little meat would be eaten? Just imagine a delicately nurtured lady taking the knife and thrusting it into the body of the animal whose flesh was to form the substance of her dinner! Think of the animal’s pleading eyes looking into hers and entreating her to stay her hand and be merciful. I know a sportsman whose hand was stayed when about to shoot a deer because the animal’s eyes, in their beauty and intelligence, so resembled the eyes of a dearly-beloved daughter that his heart failed him at the critical moment, and the beautiful, harmless life was spared, for a time at least.

In this epoch of selfishness we are apt to relegate to others unpleasant tasks, and close our eyes to our own moral responsibility in the matter. If we instigate a deed it is the same as if we perform it. We cannot justify the slaughter that man performs in the animal world by any one substantial reason other than a pandering to our own depraved appetites, and surely no stretch of the imagination can make that out a moral reason.

When one enters any of the great cities in America where the huge, wholesale slaughter-houses are established; where hundreds of animals are killed daily to supply the markets of the world with flesh for human consumption, the psychic atmosphere strikes one like a heavy pall, freighted with the agony, cries, and fears of those slaughtered brutes. It sends a thrill of horror through persons who are sensitive on the psychic plane; a plane as real as the physical, and where the record of man’s brutality makes a sorry showing. During my recent lecture tour in the United States, I arrived at a city where there was considerable commotion because many persons had suddenly become ill. The doctors, thinking they had been poisoned, made searching enquiries and it was discovered all the afflicted individuals had eaten of beef purchased from one butcher. The butcher described the animal, from whose carcass the meat had been sold, as being in splendid condition before being taken to the slaughter-house. The creature was in full vigor of existence, an animal without a trace of disease; this creature loving his life, having joy in being able to graze on the rich grass starred with buttercups and sweet-scented flowers, pulsating with responsive life under the warm rays of the glorious sun, was one day robbed of these innocent pleasures and led to the slaughter-house. On the way he scented the blood of his murdered fellows, and then the poor animal grew wild with fear at his impending doom. He fought every inch of the way for the life he loved so much, he kicked and

struggled until his eyes started from his head, and blood-flecked foam dripped from his jaws. With his whole nature in rebellion he went to his death. What was the result of the cruelty of man who thus slaughtered him to satisfy a thirst for blood and a craving for his body? The animal's psychic feelings of rage and despair were so intense that they caused a physical reaction that permeated and poisoned all the flesh of his carcass, and the consumers of his corpse were made sick by this meat poisoned only through an agonized consciousness.

How can a lover of animals eat of their dead bodies! It is a crying inconsistency. Animal food is not necessary for human support. I have been a vegetarian for 19 years; and many, through my counsel, have turned to the purer foods with no detriment to physical strength.

Often in the early morning have I gone out to commune with the birds; while sitting on the ground, crumbling cake around me, birds have flown to me from all directions, eating the food and chirping about me in a most social way, at times even resting on my head and shoulders. When I would arise and throw the crumbs into the air, the birds would catch them with an amusing and marvellous agility, noisily and happily clamoring for more. All animals feel and know when they are approached by those who are friendly to them, and non meat-eaters can readily gain their affections.

Abstaining from meat should be prompted by feelings of love and kindness towards the brute creation. There is, however, still another motive for using a purer diet. Animals have passions, even anger and jealousy. By eating the flesh, the Astral body of the man is fed on the psychic emanations belonging to the Astral body of the animal; this Astral is really the body of sensation. Now the Astral counterpart of fruits and grain being devoid of the passional element, in penetrating the Astral body of the man, builds it up in a purer fashion. Thus not only does a man become more compassionate and humane, but it is more easy for him to dominate his passions by not having them continually stimulated by his daily food.

This thought of the vital need of pure and righteous living has grown so strong with me that I have, with the valuable aid of Kate Buffington-Davis, the well-known American writer, compiled a book on practical Vegetarian Cookery to facilitate Vegetarian diet. The book can be obtained at MERCURY PUBLISHING OFFICE, 414 Mason St., San Francisco, Cal.

C. WACHTMEISTER.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

The Third Volume of MERCURY is complete with the present issue; our readers will observe that the Volume takes in the numbers from August, 1896, to August, 1897. This is on account of the last September issue being omitted, in order to enable us to get the Magazine from the press as near the 1st of every month as possible.

Commencing with the coming September issue we expect to make many important changes in the make-up of the Journal; one important feature will be a "Scientific Department." This will be in charge of our Colleague, Dr. A. Marques, whose writings along this particular line are so well known to our readers and to members of the Theosophical Society.

W. J. WALTERS, Managing Editor.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

[This Department will be devoted exclusively to children ; questions and answers from Lotus Circles on Theosophical Subjects are invited and will receive special attention.]

The following address of Mrs. Besant to the Maharani school-girls of Mysore in India contains some excellent advice, and we print it here for the perusal of the young daughters of America.

—ED. MERCURY.

My Dear Little Sisters:

In a Hindu home you know that the elder sister often gives advice to the younger ones, and so I, your elder sister, am going to give you a little advice about your studies and your conduct.

You are Hindu girls, and you are going to grow up into Hindu wives and mothers, into good women into whose lives men shall see religion, purity, devotion, sweetness, love and unselfishness in bodily form. India's daughters have been great examples of these virtues, and it is your duty to embody them in modern life. If you want to know what a Hindu woman ought to be, study the life of Sita, the sweet wife of Rama, and see how she acted. That bright, beautiful young princess left all the luxury of the palace to live in wild forests with her husband; put off her jewels and dainty silken robes for harsh garments of bark; lived on berries and forest products instead of a delicious food; traveled barefoot over rough country instead of wearing soft sandals in carriages; all because she loved Rama and would not leave his side. She cheered her husband in all his trials with sweet words and unselfish affection, and even when torn from his side, alone in a foreign country and threatened with death, she remained faithful. You must learn all about her, and try to be like her, a perfect Hindu wife. And you must also learn about Savitri, and Sakuntala, and many other noble women, who belonged to the Indian nation.

Then, if you wished to be learned, you can imitate Gargi, the great knower of Brahman, and Maitriyi to whom her husband taught the secret of immortality, the knowledge of the Self. That knowledge is gained by devotion, by service, by dutiful obedience and reverence, and in the heart of the devoted, knowledge will spring up, as Shri Krishna has said.

Learn your school lessons well, and be obedient and submissive to your teachers. But always remember that purity is more than learning, and a noble character is greater than success in books. Be loving, gentle, charitable; do not copy strange customs or leave off the simple, noble, Indian ways of living. There is nothing nobler in the world than a loving, unselfish, spiritual Indian woman, and that each of you may become. Worship the gods, obey your parents and your husbands, and be like flowers, whose sweet fragrance perfumes all the house, flowers that after blessing the earth shall bloom again in the heavenly places.

That the gods may bless you is the prayer of your loving sister.

ANNIE BESANT.

A Norse Legend.

[SELECTED.]

Loki the cunning and mischievous one married a giantess of Jotunheim and to them were born three children, Fenrir or Fenris, the Wolf, the great serpent that encompassed the earth, and Hela or Death. To-day we will listen to the story of Fenrir, the mighty wolf as it is told in the Edda.

"The wolf Fenrir was bred up among the gods; but he grew so fierce that only the valiant, wise, and warlike Tyr dared to go to and feed him. Every day Fenrir's strength and size increased so that the gods and goddesses in Asgard began to tremble at the thought of him. Also, the oracles warned them that some day Fenrir would bring destruction to them. They determined, therefore, to make a very strong fetter for him. When the fetter, which they called Læding, was finished they (the gods and goddesses) went in a body to Fenrir to bind him. Now Fenrir laughed at this fetter for he knew he could break it with one effort, so he allowed them to bind him. Just as they were going away much pleased at their success Fenrir broke Læding and set himself at liberty. Then the gods went to work upon another fetter much stronger than Læding and which was named Dromi.

Fenrir did not like the looks of Dromi but finding that his strength had increased since he broke Læding, and thinking that he could never win fame without risks and effort, again submitted to be chained. Then Fenrir shook himself violently, stretched his limbs, rolled on the ground, and thus burst the fetter which flew into pieces all around him.

This feat of Fenrir gave rise to the proverb, "To get loose from Læding, or to dash out of Dromi" when anything is to be accomplished by strong efforts.

The gods in despair sent a messenger into the country of the Dark Elves to engage certain dwarfs to make the fetter called Gleipner. This fetter was fashioned by magic out of six things, to wit, the noise made by the footfall of a cat; the beards of women; the roots of stones; the sinews of bears; the breath of fish, and the spittle of birds. This wonderful chain was as smooth and soft as a silken string, yet of very great strength—for nothing

as you know can resist magic. The gods were delighted when the messenger brought it—Gleipner—to them. Next they took the wolf to an island in the midst of the lake Amsvartnir, there they showed him the cord, and asked him to break it, assuring him, at the same time, that it was somewhat stronger than it seemed. They took it themselves, one after another, in their hands, and after trying in vain to break it said, "Thou alone, Fenrir, are able to accomplish such a feat." By this flattering, they hoped to induce him to submit to be chained. But the wolf was too wary to be easily deceived. "Methinks" he said, "that I shall gain no fame in breaking such a slender cord; but if any artifice has been employed in making it, slender though it seems, it shall never come on my feet."

The gods hastened to assure him that since he had broken iron fetters it would be very easy to break a silken one; "But," they continued, 'if thou can'st not break it, we shall know that thou art too weak to cause us any fear and we will set thee immediately at liberty."

"I fear me much" said Fenrir "that if ye once bind me ye will be in no haste to unloose me, I am loath to have this cord wound round me; but in order that ye may not doubt my courage, I will consent, provided one of you put his hand into my mouth as a pledge that ye intend me no deceit."

Here was a dilemma. The gods did not know what to do. They looked wistfully at each other until Tyr, the valiant one stepped forward, and intrepidly put his right hand between the monster's jaws. Then the gods tied up the wolf with the magic cord. When the tying was done Fenrir shook himself and stretched his mighty limbs with all his strength, with all his might, but the more efforts he made to free himself, the tighter became the cord. All the gods, except Tyr, laughed at the wild fruitless efforts of Fenrir. They were joyful for their enemy was bound—Tyr alone did not laugh, for his hand remained in the wolf's jaws. Fenrir bit it off in fury at the deception which had been practiced upon him.

When the gods saw that the wolf was bound fast, they took the chain called Gelgja, which was fixed to the fetter, and drew it through the middle of a large rock named Gjoll, which they sank very deep into the earth; afterwards, to make it still more secure, they fastened the end of the cord to a massive stone called Thvite, which they sank still deeper.

The wolf tried over and over again to get loose, and, opening his tremendous jaws, endeavored to bite them. The gods, seeing this, thrust a sword into his mouth, which pierced his under jaw

up to the hilt, so that the point touched the palate. Fenrir thus tormented, began to howl horribly, and since that time the foam flows continually from his mouth in such abundance that it forms the river called Von. There the wolf remains until comes the Ragnarok—the Twilight of the Gods that we call Pralaya.

Irene and the Yesterdays.

I remember reading a fairy tale in a child's paper, a long time ago, about a little girl, by the name of Irene, who went to see "The Yesterdays." She went to bed one lovely moon-light night, but not feeling sleepy, got up again and went to the window where she could see the moon, and began thinking. Her nurse came in soon, and asked her why she was standing in the cold, instead of being in bed. Irene replied that she was only looking at the moon, and wondering where the yesterdays went—"I thought it might be they went there." Her nurse told her she did not know what became of the yesterdays—"but, the to-morrows are what bring the sorrows and the grey hairs," said she, "though you will not have to think of them for a long time yet, dear." Then she kissed Irene, and told her, as she tucked her in, that she must not get out of bed again, for she might get cold; then she went away.

Irene was still thinking of the yesterdays, when she saw, standing in the moonlight, an odd, looking little old man, who asked her if she would like to go and see the yesterdays.

"Oh, yes so much," said Irene.

"Well, then take my hand, and we will go to the moon, where all the fairies, and the yesterdays live," said her new friend. Irene took his hand, and they floated out of the window, and up into the sky.

The moon seemed to grow larger and larger, as they came nearer to it. When they reached it there was nothing to be seen, except great fields of sand which reflected the light, and huge, rocks. Directly in front of them was a large hole or cavern, which led down where it looked very dark.

"Oh, what is this great hole?" said Irene.

"That," said her friend, "is one of the entrances into our country. We all live inside the moon, and these entrances are what you, on Earth, call the dark spots on the moon."

"Oh, it must be very dark down there, but then I suppose you have plenty of lamps," said Irene.

"No, we do not need lamps, for every-thing in our land shines, as the Sun does outside; now, close your eyes for a few moments." Irene did so, and when she opened them, she was standing in a room in a grand palace, built entirely of crystal, which shone, and gave off a beautiful light. She saw there all the fairies she has ever read of, and talked to them, and told them she had come to see the yesterdays.

"Oh," said all, looking sad, "the yesterdays, the yesterdays! Come to the queen, she will call up Memory, and he will show you all you wish to see."

They took Irene to the end of the hall, where the Queen sat on a beautiful, golden throne, with a crown of gold set with jewels on her head, and a wand of gold in her hand, with a lovely five-pointed star, which was a brilliant of solid jewels at the end. Her dress was pure white. She asked Irene what she wished. Irene replied, she wished very much to see the yesterdays. Then the Queen called Memory. He was a queer-looking, little old man, with a face that looked first sad, then happy, and changed every few moments. The Queen said:

"Memory, take Irene into pastland, to see the yesterdays," So, they went into another beautiful hall.

There were wreaths of mist, with indistinct forms floating in it, and at one end a great, white wall of mist.

"Come in order, in order, oh, ye yesterdays," said Memory. Then came a band of lovely, white-robed maidens, with wreaths of white flowers on their heads.

"Oh," said Irene, "are these all my yesterdays?"

"Yes, you could not see those of any one else."

"Oh, how beautiful you all are, and how happy you all look!"

"Yes, we *are all* happy; we have nothing to regret, we are the yesterdays of your infancy," they replied. These vanished; then came more lovely forms, some had wreaths of flowers in their hands, some looked happy, and some looked sad.

"What lovely flowers," said Irene, taking hold of the wreath of one. "Oh! there is a thorn in them, it pricked me; why did you not tell me of it?"

"When I was to-day, said the yesterday, "you were happy, but your pleasures were all selfish, they pricked; so I must carry thorns in my flowers always."

"What makes you frown so?" said Irene to another.

"When I was to-day," she replied, "you frowned all the time so I must forever frown."

"Come here, dear yesterday," said Irene to another.

"I will not come, for when I was to-day, Irene was a disobedient child," she answered.

"I will not come either," said another, "for when I was to-day you were *very* naughty, and struck your little brother, because he hid your thread where you could not find it, when you wanted it."

"Oh, I am *so* sorry, so very sorry, dear yesterdays," said Irene, beginning to cry.

"Look up, look up, do not be discouraged," said Memory.

She looked up, and there was the most lovely yesterday, she had seen, with *such* a sweet smile on her face; and such beautiful white flowers. She was dressed all in white. "When I was to-day," she said, "Irene was a *very good* girl; she ran to help her tired mother, and put the baby to sleep, and when he woke up and cried, she amused him till he laughed; and her mother had a nice rest. She tried to help every one all day, so I shall always be happy."

Then came another dressed in dark-colored garments, with a sad, sweet face. She clasped Irene in her arms, and said:

"When I was to-day, Irene was very sad, for her dear father left the world; but she tried to be brave, and comforted her poor mother, and brothers, and sisters; she tried to forget her *own* sorrow in helping others."

"Yes, you *were* sad, dear yesterday, but you were the best of all," said Irene.

"Now, Memory, I think I have seen enough; but I feel so sorry for the naughty yesterdays."

"The past, you cannot help," said Memory, "behind the mist is a great company of bright to-morrows—no, you cannot see them now—but when each to-morrow becomes to-day, try to make each *bright* and *good*, by trying to do all the good you can, in helping others. Even if you are tired, or sleepy, or doing something else, you should be always ready, and willing to help others. Try to make each to-morrow useful, and fill it full of *good* thoughts and deeds, then you will have no regrets about the yesterdays."

The next Irene knew she was in bed, with the Sun shining brightly in. "Oh, now it is to-day," said she springing up, "and I will see what a good day I can make it."

D. E. E.